BIOMEDICAL ETHICS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Biomedical Ethics is an exploration of complex contemporary ethical problems from the fields of biomedicine, healthcare, and environmental studies. Students will apply classical and contemporary ethical and moral theories, along with the principles of scientific integrity, to a range of problems such as human experimentation and informed consent, end-of-life issues, reproductive technology, genetic privacy, abortion, resource allocation, and the responsibilities of humans toward their environment. Case studies will play an integral role in the evaluation of these topics. Students will be asked to think critically about these issues, and they will be required to make and defend principled moral judgments in their written assignments.

COURSE TOPICS

- Key moral principles
- Human experimentation
- End-of-life issues
- Abortion
- Genetics
- Environmental ethics
- Universal healthcare

COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, you should be able to:

CO1 Examine the foundations of key moral principles, including deontology and utilitarianism.

CO2 Compare the foundations of various moral principles as well as theories of distributive justice.

CO3 Apply moral principles and principles of distributive justice to medical, healthcare, and bioethical issues.

CO4 Illustrate principled arguments in support of particular positions in bioethics.

CO5 Appraise various ethical positions, including the unspoken or unarticulated foundations of those positions.

CO6 Analyze the values that underlie various positions in bioethics.

CO7 Examine the role that an individual plays in society and how that role affects choices and values.

CO8 Investigate the intersection of ideologies and issues at the local, national, and global level.

CO9 Write cogent, coherent, and substantially error-free essays or papers.

COURSE MATERIALS

You will need the following materials to complete your coursework. Some course materials may be free, open source, or available from other providers. You can access free or open-source materials by clicking the links provided below or in the module details documents. To purchase course materials, please visit the University's textbook supplier.

Required Textbook

- Caplan, A. & Arp, R. eds. (2014). *Contemporary debates in bioethics.* Wiley-Blackwell. **ISBN: 978-1-4443-3714-3**

Online Writing Sources and Tutorial Options

Biomedical Ethics is a writing intensive course that places great emphasis on helping you to further develop your writing skills. Listed below are helpful writing resources and tutoring options:

- General writing reference site: The Writing Center: University of Wisconsin-Madison
- General writing reference site: The Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue
- Thomas Edison State University Writing Style Guides
- Tutoring options: Smarthinking—Online Tutoring: Anywhere, Anytime (see Student Resources > Educational Resources > Online Tutoring Resources)

COURSE STRUCTURE

Biomedical Ethics is a three-credit online course, consisting of **six** (6) modules. Modules include an overview, topics, learning objectives, study materials, and activities. Module titles are listed below.

- **Module 1: Ethical Issues**
  Course objectives covered in this module: 1, 2, 5

- **Module 2: Human Experimentation**
  Course objectives covered in this module: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

- **Module 3: End-of-Life Issues**
  Course objectives covered in this module: 3, 4, 6, 7, 8

- **Module 4: Abortion**
  Course objectives covered in this module: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

- **Module 5: Genetics and the Environment**
  Course objectives covered in this module: 2, 3, 6, 7, 8

- **Module 6: Universal Healthcare**
  Course objectives covered in this module: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

ASSESSMENT METHODS

For your formal work in the course, you are required to participate in online discussion forums, complete written assignments, and complete a final project (including an annotated bibliography). See below for details.

Consult the Course Calendar for due dates.

Promoting Originality

One or more of your course activities may utilize a tool designed to promote original work and evaluate your submissions for plagiarism. More information about this tool is available in [this document](#).

💬 *Discussion Forums*

In addition to an ungraded Introductions Forum, you are required to participate in **eleven** (11) graded online class discussions.

Communication with your mentor and among fellow students is a critical component of online learning. Participation in online class discussions involves two distinct activities: an initial response to a discussion question and at least two subsequent comments on classmates' responses.

All of these responses must be substantial. Meaningful participation is relevant to the content, adds value, and advances the discussion. Comments such as "I agree" and "ditto" are not considered value-adding

participation. Therefore, when you agree or disagree with a classmate or your mentor, state **and support** your position.

You will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of your participation, including your use of relevant course information to support your point of view, and your awareness of and responses to the postings of your classmates. Remember, these are discussions: responses and comments should be properly proofread and edited, mature, and respectful.

📋 *Written Assignments and Reflection Essays*

You are required to complete **three** (3) written assignments and **three** (3) reflection essays.

- The written assignments are in modules 1, 3, and 5. Written assignment questions give you the opportunity to demonstrate a mastery of the material from the texts, additional resources, and discussions. Written assignments include between two and four questions; your answer to each question should be between 150 and 300 words in length.

- The reflection essays are in modules 2, 4, and 6. Reflection essays give you the opportunity to write short (750- to 1000-word) reflective research papers in which you clearly state and defend a thesis.These essays will be excellent practice for your final project, and the feedback you receive on them will also help in that endeavor.

📋 *Annotated Bibliography and Final Project*

The final project in this course is a research report on a bioethics topic of your choice. (See the full description in the Final Project area of the course.) A research project begins with your conducting research on a broad area of the academic literature and concludes with a more focused argumentative essay, in which you locate and defend your own position in the debate. Since the first step is to research your topic, in module 6 of this course you will prepare and submit an annotated bibliography.

Module 6 includes a full description and requirements for this assignment. You will submit it early in module 6, allowing you to obtain and utilize helpful feedback from your mentor. In addition, at any time throughout the course before you submit your final project you have the option to submit an early stage of it—such as your thesis statement or a short outline—for mentor feedback. Your are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to improve your work.

Your will use the "Private Student-Mentor Forum" for this purpose.

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Your grade in the course will be determined as follows:

- **Discussion forums (11)**—22 percent
- **Written assignments (3)**—18 percent
- **Reflection essays (3)**—30 percent
- **Annotated bibliography**—5 percent
- **Final project**—25 percent

All activities will receive a numerical grade of 0–100. You will receive a score of 0 for any work not submitted. Your final grade in the course will be a letter grade. Letter grade equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:

A	= 93–100	C+	=	78–79
A–	= 90–92	C	=	73–77
B+	= 88–89	C–	=	70–72
B	= 83–87	D	=	60–69
B–	= 80–82	F	=	Below 60

To receive credit for the course, you must earn a letter grade of C or better (for an area of study course) or D or better (for a course not in your area of study), based on the weighted average of all assigned course work (e.g., exams, assignments, discussion postings, etc.).

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

First Steps to Success

To succeed in this course, take the following first steps:

- Read carefully the entire Syllabus, making sure that all aspects of the course are clear to you and that you have all the materials required for the course.

- Take time to read the entire Online Student Handbook. The Handbook answers many questions about how to proceed through the course, and how to get the most from your educational experience at Thomas Edison State University.

- Familiarize yourself with the learning management systems environment—how to navigate it and what the various course areas contain. If you know what to expect as you navigate the course, you can better pace yourself and complete the work on time.

- If you are not familiar with Web-based learning be sure to review the processes for posting responses online and submitting assignments before class begins.

Study Tips

Consider the following study tips for success:

- To stay on track throughout the course, begin each week by consulting the Course Calendar. The Calendar provides an overview of the course and indicates due dates for submitting assignments, posting discussions, and scheduling and taking examinations.

- Check Announcements regularly for new course information.

Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students

TESU's Academic Code of Conduct permits student AI use in support of their writing and research process--not as a replacement for original writing. Document AI use with an acknowledgment statement at the end of each assignment, noting the tools and prompts used. Cite any AI-generated content on the References page. Please review Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students for more detailed information.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Thomas Edison State University recognizes, values, and relies upon the diversity of our community. We strive to provide equitable, inclusive learning experiences that embrace our students' backgrounds, identities, experiences, abilities, and expertise.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Thomas Edison State University adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990; ADAAA, 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) oversees requests for academic accommodations related to disabilities; a student who is pregnant, postpartum, or a student parenting a newborn who is not the birth parent [as covered under NJSA18A]; and students requesting academic accommodation for a short-term/temporary illness and/or injury. Information can be found on the Office of Student Accessibility Services webpage and questions can be sent to ADA@tesu.edu.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

To ensure success in all your academic endeavors and coursework at Thomas Edison State University, familiarize yourself with all administrative and academic policies including those related to academic integrity, course late submissions, course extensions, and grading policies.

For more, see:

- [University-wide policies](#)
- [Undergraduate academic policies](#)
- [Undergraduate course policies](#)
- [Graduate academic policies](#)
- [Graduate course policies](#)
- [Nursing student policies](#)
- [Nursing graduate student policies](#)
- [International student policies](#)
- [Academic code of conduct](#)